



July 5, 2024

Sue Eickhoff  
Forest Supervisor  
Ashley National Forest  
355 North Vernal Ave.  
Vernal, Utah 84078

Supervisor Eickhoff,

Thank you for allowing the State of Wyoming to comment on the Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) and revised draft Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area Management Plan. Wyoming prides itself on its outdoor recreation opportunities, and we see increasing interest in the state's southwest. The Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area (FGNRA) is a vital part of the economy in southwest Wyoming. Wyoming's forty-eight reservoir and river water miles and 96,149 acres in the FGNRA attract tens of thousands of visitors annually. Providing significant economic benefits to local economies, with room for growth and improvements.

Wyoming was pleased to see the Ashley National Forest Plan Revision (ANF) process completed, which had been ongoing for over five years. The State participated diligently as a cooperating agency, submitting hundreds of comments and attending many meetings. While frustrating at times, the state deeply appreciates the renewed efforts to engage cooperators on the ANF, fully understand our issues, and provide more than dismissive justifications for our concerns. We hope that these efforts will carry through the FGNRA process.

Understanding that the FGNRA spans two states that differ in landscape and local interests, the proposed alternative (alternative B) and alternative C highlights maintenance, improvements, and expansion on the Utah side of the FGNRA more than the Wyoming side. Wyoming would like equal attention given to each state and the unique opportunities they present. FGNRA could be a world-class recreation destination. However, this will require a unit-wide approach that accounts for different multiple uses across the unit's landscape, considers local interests, and ensures that existing and new facilities are maintained. Additionally, in our comments, we have highlighted several instances where the Forest Service noted coordination and consultation with relevant state agencies is necessary but did not include Wyoming state agencies in the list of partners.

Attached are detailed comments from the State of Wyoming. We are eager to discuss the proposed alternative, as our input can significantly contribute to the decision-making process. We request that the Forest Service closely review the comments of Wyoming state agencies and consult with the state and other cooperating agencies before the final environmental assessment and plan are released. Your thorough review and consultation are crucial to ensuring the best possible outcome for the FGNRA process.

Sincerely,



Mark Gordon  
Governor of Wyoming

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